

Forgiven and Forgiving

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[0 : 00] Let's pray. Our gracious God and heavenly Father,! We acknowledge that in and of ourselves, we cannot profit from the word of truth and therefore ask and plead for the spirit of grace to descend upon us and to enable us to rightly understand the word and then to live according to it.

Further, we pray that as I open up the word, that I might be given the spirit of truth and the spirit of power and the presence of the spirit to enable me this morning to preach the word with faithfulness, fidelity, with fervency, and with freedom.

O Lord, we believe in the power of your spirit to do good and that your word has told us through your son that we have not because we ask not.

We come asking now for the salvation of sinners in our midst, for those who do not believe the truth and who have no awareness of their eternal state at this very moment.

Would you awake them and would you convince them and would you bring them before the bar of judgment that they might see and understand how serious and how awesome it is a thing to be before the Holy One and yet in your mercy, you would show to them Christ and show to him that there is forgiveness in him.

[2 : 02] We pray these things now in the name of our blessed Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ. Amen. Amen. Amen. Thanks.

Lord God, I have tasted enough bitterness in my life.

The pictures of the killers are in my mind every day and I have no peace but only hatred, anger, and bitterness in my soul.

I did so him. So him was a young man who was raised and lived in Cambodia and he lived during the time where it was known of the killing fields of Cambodia.

some of you may not be aware of what took place but in the 1970s under the Communist Party known as the Khmer Rouge there was atrocities that took place of unknown proportion and one day so came and his father his three younger brothers and his sister were taken out into the jungle by a band of soldiers who had dug a grave for them.

[3 : 35] And so him was struck and was pushed into the grave and then his father and his younger brothers and his baby brother and his sister were all brutally murdered and they were all pushed in the grave.

And these soldiers they had left them and how shocking it is then to read that they even laughed as they left the grave and thought that all of the family members had died.

But so him himself had been grievously injured but he was able to climb out of the grave and when he climbed out of the grave he went looking for his mother and his sister.

and while he was looking for them he peered and noticed that they too were being executed by the soldiers. And on that very day when so him lost all of his family members he swore that he would avenge the death of his family.

family. Sometime afterward so him became a Christian and he began to ask the question is it possible for me to forgive my killers?

[5 : 09] He knew the command he understood the scriptures at that point enough that God had commanded us to forgive those as we have been forgiven. But he struggled because he had suffered so much and had so much pain.

But he finally came to realize after some time that because of the merciful Lord had forgiven him it was likewise right for him to forgive his killers.

Because the merciful Lord had forgiven him he came to his own conclusion that it was right for him to forgive them.

And so so him prayed Lord God I have tasted enough bitterness in my life grant me peace and clean my heart as I forgive those who killed my family.

Grant me peace as I forgive those who killed my family. If you have struggled with forgiveness in some measure either through some bitterness some anger or some resentment in your heart like so him did.

[6 : 32] If you want to know how you can drain the poison of bitterness from your own soul then this is the passage in Matthew chapter 18 which is for you and for me. So turn with me in copies of your scriptures to Matthew chapter 18 in Matthew chapter 18 Jesus teaches his own disciples how and why they must deal with an unforgiving heart.

How and why they must deal with an unforgiving heart. And so Jesus teaches his own disciples then and still today that we must address forgiveness in our own hearts.

So let us read in Matthew chapter 18 verse 21 through 35 why we must learn to forgive one another. Then Peter came up and said to him Lord how often will my brother sin against me and I forgive him as many as seven times.

Jesus said to him I do not say to you seven times but seventy times seven therefore the kingdom of heaven may be compared to a king who wished to settle accounts with his servants.

When he began to settle one was brought to him who owed him ten thousand talents and since he could not pay his master ordered him to be sold with his wife and children and all that he had and payment to be made.

[8 : 00] So the servant fell on his knees imploring him have patience with me and I will pay you everything and out of pity for him the master of that servant released him and forgave him the debt.

But when that same servant went out he found one of his fellow servants who owed him a hundred denarii and seizing him he began to choke him saying pay what you owe.

So his fellow servant fell down and pleaded with him have patience with me and I will repay you. He refused and went and put him in prison until he should pay the debt.

When his fellow servants saw what had taken place they were greatly distressed and they went and reported to their master all that had taken place. And his master summoned him and said to him you wicked servant I forgave you all that debt because you pleaded with me and should you not have had mercy on your fellow servant as I had mercy on you.

And in anger his master delivered him to the jailers until he should pay all his debt. So also my heavenly father will do to every one of you if you do not forgive your brother from your heart.

[9 : 30] so read God's word. In Matthew 18 verses 21 through 25 we see here the Lord Jesus speaking to Peter and his disciples and he's speaking specifically to them about the issue of forgiveness.

I think it would be helpful for us just to have a brief idea of the context that this passage is addressing. In Matthew 18 you have Matthew who is now addressing what is known as his fourth major discourse or fourth major teaching.

In chapters 5 through 7 you have the Sermon on Mount which is his first teaching. In chapter 10 is his second teaching and then chapter 13 you have this third teaching and then in chapter 18 we come to his fourth teaching.

And at the beginning of the chapter the Lord Jesus is dealing first of all with the issue of greatness and humility and that's then followed by how evil it is to cause a believer to sin.

And then the Lord Jesus speaks afterwards to address the issue of how the Father is concerned for and seeking after straying sheep.

[10 : 41] And then immediately in verses 15 through 19 we have verses 15 through 20 where the Lord Jesus is instructing his disciples of how they are to treat one another when one sins against them.

and so now follows on chapters 18 verse 21 and 35 is essentially how are you and I or better how are the disciples to treat one another in light of sin.

And so I want us to fix our thoughts on because our merciful Lord has forgiven us we likewise should forgive one another.

Because our merciful Lord has forgiven us we must likewise forgive one another. Now you notice in verse 21 turn back there verse 21 the apostle Paul sorry apostle Peter approaches the Lord Jesus and he comes up to him and he asks him a very simple question how often will my brother sin against me and I forgive him?

And Peter answers as many as seven times. Now Matthew has connected in verse 21 notice the words brother and sin in verse 21 Matthew has connected that in verse 21 with verse 15 if you notice in verse 15 where it says if your brother sins against you and here as I mentioned before that the Lord Jesus is dealing with the matter of how you are to treat one another when one sins against you but now the question that follows is if we're dealing with one another how do we then a brother sins against me how am I to then forgive him and how many times am I to forgive him?

[12 : 24] Now it's interesting that Peter speaks of seven times and perhaps Peter was thinking of himself as being magnanimous and generous of saying seven times well we know that in some of the early writings of the rabbis that the teachers in a discussion said that if you are to forgive your brother three times but on the fourth time that a brother sins against you you are not to forgive him so three times the teachings in the rabbinic literature said that you forgive but on the fourth time you are not to forgive and so Peter probably having some sense of this then says before the Lord Jesus not four but I'm going to forgive seven times and the Lord Jesus then says to Peter I say not seven times but seventy times seven now we're not to think of I think the Lord Jesus is suggesting that we take seventy times seven that is four ninety and say that we're to forgive four ninety times but really the Lord

Jesus is teaching and saying that the disciples they are to forgive one another without limits there is no limit there's no outer boundary there's no outer edge to the number of occasions when a brother or sister comes to you and sins that you are to forgive them and so we see now let us consider the parable and the Lord Jesus then begins to enter into a parable in verses twenty through twenty three through thirty five and so let us consider the parable and the merciful Lord who has chosen to forgive and so the merciful Lord who has chosen to forgive and the first thing I want us to notice is who the Lord has chosen to forgive we'll read in verse twenty three therefore the kingdom of heaven may be compared to a king who wished to settle accounts with his servants and when he began to settle one was brought to him who owed him ten thousand talents and since he could not pay his master ordered him to be sold with his wife and children and all he had in payment to be made and so who has this gracious master or lord who's referred to in the passage as a king later on he's called a lord who is this gracious lord chosen to forgive notice he's chosen to forgive a servant who owes him it says in the text ten thousand talents must be if we were to exchange that maybe in our day and

I would use the example of let's just say if a bohemian who's earning one thousand dollars a month which is twelve thousand dollars a year we would then equate that to be that the person would be a hundred paid a hundred eighty thousand dollars is what one talent is a hundred and eighty thousand and then if we had to extend that we would calculate in terms of what that would be ten thousand talents!

two point four billion dollars and so here is this servant who's owing his master an enormous amount an insurmountable amount which he cannot pay and he comes before his lord and his master and what does he say he pleads with him he falls on his face and he pleads with him to have patience with him can we do something with the echo he pleads with him to have patience and promises that he will pay now obviously the servant had no means of repaying that kind of amount and so who is the merciful lord chosen to forgive he's chosen to forgive a servant with an enormous debt that cannot be repaid and who is so desperate so desperate that he has nothing at all to repay his debt now when we consider our lives you and

I we are the servants who have an enormous spiritual debt before the lord you and I have an enormous spiritual debt before before the lord on account of our sin and we know that in the scriptures the term debt is used to signify or to denote sin because in Matthew chapter 6 you'll remember that the lord himself said to his disciples that they are to pray forgive us our debts as we have forgiven our debtors and forgive us our debts is obviously speaking about our sin and so you and I who have an enormous amount of spiritual debt are those who come before the lord who have our sin before him and that we are those who stand before the lord in the same condition and so we are those who owe god ten thousand talents of sin because of our immorality impurity and idolatry we owe the sovereign lord because of our sin ten thousand talents for our envy our enmity and our evil speaking we owe our lord because of our ten thousand talents of sin for our resentful thoughts our revengeful hearts and our retaliatory spirit and so we are those if we have truly repented of our sin and trusted in

[18 : 47] Jesus Christ who are desperately have cried out to the lord not to have patience with us unlike the servant who bowed before him and said have patience with us we who knew our sin and knew the enormous amount of it the magnitude of it went before the lord and fell before him and said lord have mercy upon us for your own name sake do not count your sin towards me we cried out to the lord to acquit us to pardon us and to forgive us for all of our iniquity our transgression our evil speech our evil motives our evil desires all of them we have if you truly repented of your sin have cried out to the Lord for forgiveness and so who is it that the Lord has chosen to forgive he has chosen to forgive those servants who have an enormous debt that is owed to the Lord now the question that we should ask is why has the

Lord chosen to forgive why has he chosen to forgive you look back at the text there it says in verse 27 and out of pity for him the master of that servant released him and forgave him the debt why has the Lord and the master chosen to forgive his servant who owed him an enormous amount it was not because the servant deserved it it was not because the servant earned it it was because it says in the text the what the pity!

or the compassion of the Lord he looked upon the miserable state and condition of this very servant and knew that he could not do a single thing to repay the debt and he was moved with pity and with compassion and it says that he forgave his debt the same word compassion is spoken of a few times in the gospel of Matthew or pity you remember that Matthew speaks of describing the Lord Jesus that when the Lord Jesus looked out at the multitude it says he had compassion for them because they were like sheep without a shepherd the Lord Jesus had a compassion he had a pity for those who were like sheep without a shepherd the same thing you remember that Jesus also when he saw that the crowd had been within three days and he saw that they had been with him it says that

Lord Jesus had compassion for them in Matthew 15 and not only did the Lord show compassion for them or pity we see later on that the Lord described his actions toward his servants as showing mercy look in verse 33 it says later on when we get to that it says here is the Lord speaking to a servant he says should you not have mercy on your fellow servant as I had mercy on you shouldn't you have had mercy and so why is the Lord had why has the Lord forgiven it is because he has shown mercy he has shown pity he has shown compassion and so we must ask the question then what about you and what about me why has the Lord our God chosen to forgive you or me why has he who needs nothing is perfectly content in all of who he is has no compulsion has no obligation to forgive one of us for our sin much less all of our sin and why is it he has forgiven you and it is because of his compassion and his mercy it is his nature it is the character of the

Lord our God to show mercy and mercy is essential to his being he cannot be God if he is not merciful he cannot be God if he is not compassionate it is essential to his nature and to his being and so the Lord saw us in our miserable hopeless desperate condition and showed compassion and mercy toward us for his own namesake and so just as God is infinite he is infinitely merciful you and I are finite and therefore there are limits to our mercy but with God there is no bottom to the ocean of his mercy he overflows in mercy he is rich in mercy he is great in mercy there is no depth to the mercy of

[23 : 50] God to forgive sinners like you and me and so what is so amazing is that the Lord has chosen to forgive you and I because of his immeasurable mercies and it is free free undeserved we do not deserve one drop of his mercies and yet he pours streams of mercies on his people and yet you and I who have provoked his wrath day after day and have acted with rebellion night after night and yet he sees us and his heart is moved with compassion and with pity to forgive us to forgive us not of one sin not of a few sins but of an enormous amount of sins but not only have we seen who and why the Lord has chosen to forgive let us now consider how the

Lord has chosen to forgive how the Lord has chosen to forgive now it is true that in the text the Lord Jesus in the parable does not explicitly address how the servant is forgiven simply states that he is acquitted he is released he is forgiven but nevertheless I think we need to consider our spiritual debt and how it is that you and I have been forgiven it is imperative that we have the clarity for the basis or the ground upon which you and I have been forgiven for all of our sins and so there are some who think that since God is merciful and he's full of compassion as if that's the only attributes of God that he's only mercy and he's only compassion they think that therefore God can just forgive sin per se without a ground and a basis and they forget that the same God who is compassionate who is infinite in mercy is also a God who honors his law who is a

God of justice who is a God of holiness he's a God of wrath and he's a God of righteousness and so those who think that God can just forgive without honoring his law his justice his righteousness are sadly mistaken and they have constructed a God of their own minds and their own imaginations and so such persons who love to talk about a God of love who is sentimental who is weak and who is good-natured while compromising his perfect law his inflexible justice his burning holiness his dreadful wrath and his perfect righteousness we must remember what the scriptures teach and the scriptures teach plainly and clearly that the soul that sins will die Ezekiel 18 verse 20 the soul that sins will die and that the wages of sin is death Romans 6 23 and then you remember also in

Hebrews 9 it says without the shedding of blood there is what no forgiveness of sin and so how then has the Lord chosen to forgive what is the only basis upon which a boy or a girl a man or a woman can be forgiven it is because of the death resurrection and exaltation of the Lord Jesus in Christ we have redemption and what's the other part of it the forgiveness of our transgressions or trespasses Ephesians 1 7 forgiveness is in Christ through his blood which is another way to express his death and so the same thing is said in Colossians 1 verse 14 in Christ we have redemption we have the forgiveness of sins now you remember that when the Lord was on the road with the two who on the road to Emmaus the Lord then was opening up the scriptures to them and it says their hearts were burning and what did the Lord Jesus say the Lord began to show them from the scriptures it is written that what the Christ must suffer and die and be raised again on the third day and then it says what afterwards it says these words that repentance and forgiveness of sins should be proclaimed in his name to all nations and so therefore it is not arrogance it is not hubris it is not unkind to tell people that there is no forgiveness at all apart from the crucified Lord in fact it is sinful rebellious disobedience to the word of God to proclaim any ground any other basis other than the death resurrection and exaltation of the Lord

Jesus for the forgiveness of any sin much less all sin and so the only name under heaven by which anyone can be forgiven for which one sin much less all the sins is that the name which is above every name and that one day every knee will bow and every tongue will confess that Jesus Christ is Lord to the glory of God that is the only ground and basis upon which you and I and anyone else can be forgiven of our sin and so brothers and sisters do not be deceived by all the chatter that we hear and all the noise that is circulating around us on the day that comes of judgment everyone will discover on that day that there is only one way to salvation for the Lord Jesus himself said I am the way the truth and the life no one no boy no girl no man no woman no one can come come to the father except through me one Sunday an elderly woman came and asked her pastor for help and she told the pastor that she had a diabetic son and a son who had gone blind and was now close to death and she asked him to come and help her the pastor came and he entered the room and he got the shock of his life the blind invalid middle-aged man lying helpless in the bed before the pastor was the prison guard who had spread human waste on the very pastor's breakfast toast while he was in prison for first nine months of his imprisonment now what do you think if you were in that situation you would do and you know what the

[31 : 06] Lord has done for you in terms of forgiveness here's what he did he cried out oh Lord do not fail me now as he prayed underneath his breath and he did not divulge who he was at all and the pastor granted to his former tormentor forgiveness in his own heart and help the old woman administer the medicine to relieve her son's pain and pray for her son and returned home awed by a new and deeper understanding of the grace and mercy of God that pastor understood that God who had forgiven him of all of his sin and no matter what had taken place to him even though he had been imprisoned and his manner tortured that when he stood at the very bed of this man and he had an opportunity to show an unforgiving spirit the grace and mercy of God worked in his soul to enable him not only to minister to him but to forgive him well having looked at the merciful

Lord who has chosen to forgive let us now consider secondly the ruthless servant who refuses to forgive the ruthless servant who refuses to forgive back in chapter 18 we read that when that same servant went out he found one of his fellow servants who owed him a hundred denarii and seizing him he began to choke him saying pay what you owe so his fellow servant fell down and pleaded with him have patience with me and I will repay you and so the Lord Jesus continues this parable and we read that this same servant who had been forgiven this enormous debt now has an opportunity to extend mercy and kindness and compassion what does he do he does the opposite he takes the very fellow servant of his and demands that he repay him his debt and notice the amount it is it says he's demanding of him to pay what a hundred denarii he actually puts his hands on him and begins to choke him for a hundred denarii and we heard already that he had been forgiven of ten thousand talents six thousand denarii equal one talent six thousand denarii equals one talent and here is now a denarii is equivalent to a day's wages one day wage and he is asking and demanding that this servant pay him back what one hundred days wage and he himself had been forgiven of what an enormous amount and yet he is treating this person with such ruthless heart if we have kept the same number that we spoke of before of an annual salary of twelve thousand or one thousand dollars per month this servant essentially would have owed his servant about thirty three thousand dollars thirty three thousand dollars in comparison to what he had been forgiven two point four billion dollars it is pittance it is a trifling amount it cannot even be compared and notice what he is doing he is demanding right after he had received mercy almost that the servant would repay him and what is even more shocking is that the second servant's actions and words mirrored the first servant look back and notice what he does his actions was very similar to what the first servant did he fell on the ground like the first servant and like the first servant he said have patience with me very similar words and you would have thought that this person this first servant would have remembered what had just taken place that he himself had fallen before his lord and master he himself would have thought he would remember that he himself asked have patience with me and now he is treating this very servant with a ruthless callous hard heart and he is refusing to forgive a fellow servant who is just as desperate as the first servant and not only does the first servant refuse to forgive but then takes the desperate servant and throws him into prison until the desperate second servant would repay the outstanding debt and so what a contrast between the first servant and his lord the lord forgave him of his enormous debt and the first servant now with ruthlessness demands that he be repaid a trifling amount and throws him into prison and it's patently contradictory that how someone who is owed an enormous debt and plead for forgiveness and receive

forgiveness then turn and act in such a manner a man the idea is simply ludicrous but now let us search our own hearts and inquire whether we are acting as a ruthless servant who is refusing to forgive another brother or sister or anyone else have you been forgiven a mountain of sin yes if you believe the Lord Jesus have you been acquitted of a heap of iniquity have you been released from a mound of transgression yes did you plead with the Lord to remove your crushing burden of guilt did you fall of one time when you said

Lord this is too much for me to bear did you beg the Lord to deliver you one day from the just damnation of eternal fire to come and if you answer yes then ask your soul whether there are persons whom you or me refuse to forgive are there persons that you refuse to forgive it may be a spouse it may be a child it may be a family member it may be a fellow student it may be a co-worker there may be harbored resentment or deep bitterness towards another and therefore ask whether you could honestly say before God almighty that I who owe 10,000 talents to the almighty for my wickedness and have been forgiven yet I remain unwilling to forgive another brother or sister for their hundred pennies for their hundred pennies yes

I'm not denying that they have sinned but in light of what God has forgiven you and I it is nothing can you enjoy the sweetness of such great mercy and forgiveness and not have a strong compulsion to forgive your brother or sister in Christ must as one writer said Christ be a sacrifice for your offense and must your brother or sister who offended you be sacrificed to your wrath let me say that again must Christ be a sacrifice for your offense and must your brother or sister who offended you be sacrificed to your wrath oh brothers and sisters here this morning Let us lay a hand on our soul and call ourselves to account.

[39 : 26] Let us plead to the all-knowing God to expose the inconsistency and contradiction and ask that he give you grace to forgive just as God in Christ forgave you.

Just as God in Christ forgave you. Beg of God the words of the psalmist. Create in me, O Lord, a clean heart and renew in me a steadfast spirit.

Plead with God. Now, the servant who refused to forgive is similar to an example of a relationship between a person named John and Chantel.

John had approached Chantel, and Chantel was from East Africa, and pleaded with her to forgive him for his sin. He acknowledged that he had sinned before her, and he said to her that he had committed a most horrific crime, and he was standing before her and asking her to forgive him.

And Chantel said, I will not forgive you. On the account that you did not take counsel with yourself, I can forgive you because of this time you never thought to come.

[41 : 01] I won't forgive you. Here is this young lady, a man who comes before her, and great was his sin.

Great was his crime. He had actually killed her father. And here he is coming before her and asking, please, begging her to forgive me.

And she, in her heart, stiffened herself and said, I will not forgive you. No. Brothers and sisters, may we, in our own hearts, whatever sin that has taken place, no matter how deep it is, and deep are some sins, no doubt.

But let us not imitate that kind of a spirit, but ask God for the grace to not imitate the servant who refused to forgive, but rather to imitate the God who forgives.

Let's move on. Having examined the ruthless servant who refuses to forgive, let us now consider the righteous Lord who warns all who refuse to forgive. The righteous Lord who warns all who refuse to forgive.

[42 : 23] We look back at the text here in Matthew chapter 18. It says in verse 31 that his servants actually had witnessed what had taken place between the first servant and the second servant, and they go to their Lord and Master and report everything.

And the Master then, in verse 32, summoned the first servant and said to him, notice what he first said, he calls him a wicked servant. And then he says, I forgave you all that debt because you pleaded with me.

And should you not have had mercy on your fellow servant as I had mercy on you? And so in anger, his Master delivered him to the jailers, or better translation, should be torturous until he should pay all his debt.

So also my Heavenly Father will do to every one of you if you do not forgive your brother from your heart. And so here is the merciful Lord who is also the righteous Lord probing his servant with this very question.

Should you not have had mercy on your fellow servant as I had mercy on you? I forgave you for all that debt.

[43 : 40] You pleaded with me. And should you not have shown mercy? And so here, Lord Jesus is concluding this passage with a very sober warning to his disciples then and still today that for those who refuse to forgive, anyone who refuses to forgive another brother from the heart will be liable to judgment.

Because in verse 34, notice, he says, and his anger's Master delivered him to the jailers or the torturers until he should pay all his debt. And that's speaking of what is called the eschatological judgment that on the final day, those who say that they've been forgiven but maintain a spirit of unforgiveness will be exposed.

the truth will be made known. All those who have been truly forgiven will truly forgive from the heart.

I didn't say immediately but they will. They will. They will. And so an unforgiving spirit is a mark of someone who is unforgiven.

If it is perpetual and you continue to harbor that, you have forgotten what you owe your Lord and Savior. You have forgotten what you have been forgiven of. You have forgotten what you are before the Lord.

[45 : 01] And so this last statement is very similar to what the Lord Jesus said previously in Matthew chapter 6 verse 14 and 15. If you forgive others their trespasses, your heavenly Father would also forgive you.

And then he says this, but if you do not forgive others their trespasses, then neither will your Father forgive your trespasses.

Matthew 6 verse 14 and 15. If you will not forgive, then you shall not be forgiven. It is an indication that one has never truly received such mercy and such kindness and such compassion.

And so I say to you brothers and sisters here first, are you holding and harboring any ill will and bitterness to anyone?

Is it simply a matter of you saying with your lips, but in your heart, you know that the pattern of forgiveness in Ephesians 4 verse 32 and Colossians 3 13, we are called to forgive just as Christ has forgiven us.

[46 : 17] That is the standard, that is the measurement. And so however you think of forgiving one another, ask yourself, have I forgiven like that?

Have I forgiven? And the truth is none of us, none of us apart from the grace of God can truly forgive. And bless God that it is not a work of ourselves, but it is a work of the spirit of grace that enables any one of us to truly forgive from the heart.

Tilman Geski was a German who was living in Turkey for more than 10 years and he was working on a Bible translation project. Geski and two former Muslims who had been converted to Christ one day met at the office with five young men ages 19 to 21 to discuss Christianity.

And the young men however had no real interest in talking about Christianity. None whatsoever. But shortly after the meeting they tied up Geski and the two Christians were killed and they tortured them.

And while the murders were shocking to the eventually the five young men were captured while the murderers were shocking to the Turkish people what was even more stunning what was even more amazing was that the wife of Tilman Geski said immediately that she forgave her husband's killers.

[47 : 56] Soon after she mopped up her husband's blood from the floor Susan Geski told a reporter listen to these very words God forgive them for they know not what they do.

I forgive the one who did this and later Susan explained why she forgave these young men for she said that listen very carefully why she forgave because the Lord forgave me so much because the Lord had forgiven me so much I now have forgiven them horrific was the death but greater was the forgiveness greater was the forgiveness and so Susan understood that since God had forgiven her she must likewise forgive others and so I conclude brothers and sisters here let us be a people who forgive one another from the heart and for those who are here in our midst who are unbelieving you have heard of the great mercy of God you have heard how the Lord is willing to forgive sinners of an enormous death of an infinite amount of sin it doesn't matter what you have done no matter what you have said no matter what you have thought no matter what you have actually expressed no matter what the sin is the Lord is infinite in mercy he is ready to forgive he is great in mercy he is rich in mercy and he is willing to forgive even you this morning and so I ask will you leave here this morning with such a gracious offer of mercy in Christ without falling before the throne of God and saying

Lord have mercy upon my soul be merciful to me the sinner may God grant that no one here would not leave without having had dealings with the Lord of mercy and the God of all grace in Jesus Christ let us pray our merciful God and heavenly father we acknowledge that we have sinned against you and done what is evil in your sight the best of us has fallen short of your glory and the best of us have at times harbored resentment anger malice towards others we ask that you would forgive us and cleanse us from our sin and you grant to us by the spirit of grace that we would truly forgive one another from the heart as we have been forgiven and that when we are tempted to harbor ill will we will remember the enormous death that we have been forgiven and that we would plead for grace to forgive as we have been forgiven we thank you that such kindness has come to us in

Christ our redeemer and that truly may we discover more and more that his mercy is more we pray this in Christ's name amen